

NORTHEAST REGION

MINNESOTA SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

2014 Annual Report



585 Entrepreneurs/
Businesses Served



7,162 Total Hours of
Consulting Services



906 Jobs Created and Saved



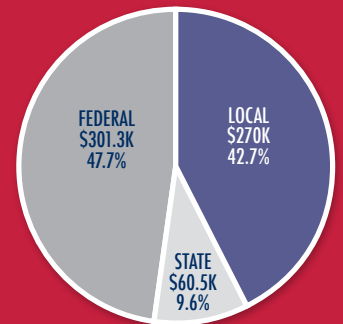
\$8.0M Capital Accessed for
Business Investment



42 New Businesses Created



\$21.2M Business Revenue Increased



**NORTHEAST
REGION SBDC
BUDGET**



HELPING BUSINESSES GROW AND SUCCEED

NORTHEAST REGION MINNESOTA SBDC

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NORTHEAST REGION

2014 SBDC Business Spotlight



Frost River

Christian Benson wasn't planning to buy Frost River when he moved to Duluth with his family, he intended to purchase a satellite mitten-making business. After investigating the possibilities, he decided to invest in a brand instead and became the owner of a formerly failed business, Frost River. Once Chris became owner of Frost River in 2009, he launched the website and orders started coming in!

Benson consulted with the Northeast SBDC hosted by the University of Minnesota Duluth Center for Economic Development to get assistance and to find available resources. SBDC business consultant Curt Walczak provided retail and online presence assistance, while business

consultant Jennifer Pontinen discussed the manufacturing/wholesale side of the business. Chris also participated in the Student to Business Initiative Marketing program through CED as well as a pilot project for business sustainability.

The website that Benson launched five years ago is the driving force for the business today. Thanks to their internet presence, Frost River sells and ships its wares across the country and around the world. There is steady sales growth in the areas of individual, corporate, and retail sales. Frost River now employs 30 people.

All Frost River products are made in the U.S. and are guaranteed to last. Benson's perseverance and vision is now reaching further than a brand of canvas bags. He is working to revitalize a neighborhood and community.

Website: www.frostriver.com



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